

January 23, 2007

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WASHINGTON, DC- U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon issued the following statement this evening, following President Bush's State of the Union address.

"Tonight the President addressed Congress and the American public regarding the state of our Union. While our nation is facing many challenges right now, I had hoped President Bush would address the pressing issues facing the people of south Louisiana and all along the Gulf Coast as we slowly recover from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Unfortunately he did not.

"I was there when the President stood in Jackson Square after Hurricane Katrina and pledged to do everything he could to help us rebuild greater than ever. I was also there when the President spoke at Warren Easton High School in New Orleans on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's landfall. I, and the people of Louisiana, have not forgotten what was promised us.

"As we know all too well in south Louisiana, we have a long way to go before we fully recover from the devastation caused by Katrina and Rita. I urge the President to remember the commitments he and the federal government have made to help us, because we are still struggling, almost a year and a half after the storms. We survived the worst natural disaster in our nation's history, and we are fighting to make our way back. But we need more help from the President and Congress.

"As part of that help, I also urge the President to fully support a comprehensive hurricane and flood protection system for the communities along the Gulf Coast, so that tragedies like Katrina and Rita don't threaten us year after year. The millions of Americans who work in south Louisiana provide the rest of our country with a large portion of its energy, seafood, and agricultural products. We deserve to have sufficient protection from the deadly storms that regularly threaten our homes and livelihoods. Anything less is unacceptable.

"I will keep working with the President and the rest of the Louisiana delegation to make sure

our needs are not forgotten in Washington. The people of south Louisiana and the entire Gulf Coast are counting on the federal government to fulfill the promises that were made to us. Our communities, culture, and way of life are at stake, and we can't afford to keep waiting."

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